

Call for expressions of interest (open to 10 January 2026):

Constructive Alcohol – production, consumption, everything else

Kia ora everyone,

I am planning an edited book – **Constructive Alcohol – production, consumption, everything else** (working title). I have a couple of international publishers interested and I am looking for contributions from a wide array of disciplines and across a diversity of societies and fields – Global South, Global North, Transnational, Global.

The book will be a response to Mary Douglas' ground-breaking work *Constructive Drinking* (1987). Published nearly 40 years ago, *Constructive Drinking* continues to be a touchstone for research that foundationally acknowledges that 'drinking' is always socio-culturally constructed, historically contingent and morally relativistic. Douglas and her contributors firmly rejected approaches that assumptively problematized or pathologized alcohol and instead critically analysed benefits ascribed to alcohol in different social settings. Moreover, our proposed book comes at a time when alcohol is subject to multiple criticisms and challenges, not least of which are the World Health Organisation's repeated declarations that there is no safe level of alcohol consumption; the impacts of climate change; and declining consumption globally.

Our guiding brief is reasonably straightforward – to respond to Douglas's volume by championing present-day research that focuses on constructive aspects of alcohol that can conceivably be framed as 'beyond capitalism'. Obviously everything current is either mediated through or entangled with capitalism, so 'beyond capitalism' is a conceit, not an empirical requirement.

In the first instance it simply means 'beyond' the sort of economic, financial, corporate, employment, national industry, etc considerations that characterise much research and media reporting on alcohol. More fittingly it means a focus on constructive aspects that presently contest, resist, or in some way provide alternatives (radical or plain-sight) to capitalist economics and society; that could plausibly continue to exist – or indeed have existed – in thoroughly post-capitalist or egalitarian social settings; or which are in some way universal to human existence (e.g. biological, chemical, evolutionary). Our goal is to foreground examples of constructive alcohol and, in doing so, hopefully also highlight some constructive ways of living.

I am looking for contributions from the arts, humanities, social sciences and science. Potential topic areas include alcohol production, labouring, consumption, exchange, sociality, politics, human evolution, more-than-human actants, religion, literature, art, music, film, adaptogenic alternatives, biology, gender, age, ethnicity, sexuality, etc, including pieces that respond to contributions from Douglas' original text.

If you have research or analysis that can respond to this conceit of constructive alcohol, then please consider sending an expression of interest to my email below. If you know of anyone else who might be interested, please pass on this EOI. Anticipated publication is early-mid 2027.

Your EOI should include: your name, institutional affiliation and career stage, tentative title of the chapter, brief (150 words) description of your proposed substantive topic, historical and geographical focus, and approach (data, methods, theory). Please put **Constructive Alcohol** in the subject line and send by **26 January, 2026**. If your proposal potentially fits the book, I will ask you to submit a fuller abstract. Please email if you have any questions.

Editor: Peter J. Howland, Senior Lecturer, Sociology, Te Kunenga Ki Pūrehuroa Massey University, Aotearoa New Zealand. <https://orcid.org/0000-0002-3742-0004>

Email: p.j.howland@massey.ac.nz